

T H E S E S

1936

Volume IV



PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

Paul's Doctrine of Reconciliation

Alden Arthur Read

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

An Examination of the Ethical Teachings of Jesus
and Paul as Related to the Summum Bonum

William Noble King

Emersonian Mysticism and Its Sources

George William MacCracken

The Struggle Between Classes for the Division of
Wealth

Wallace deOrtega Maxey

The University Pastor Movement

William Richard Steininger

The Monotheism of Akhenaten

Toru Yamazaki

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION

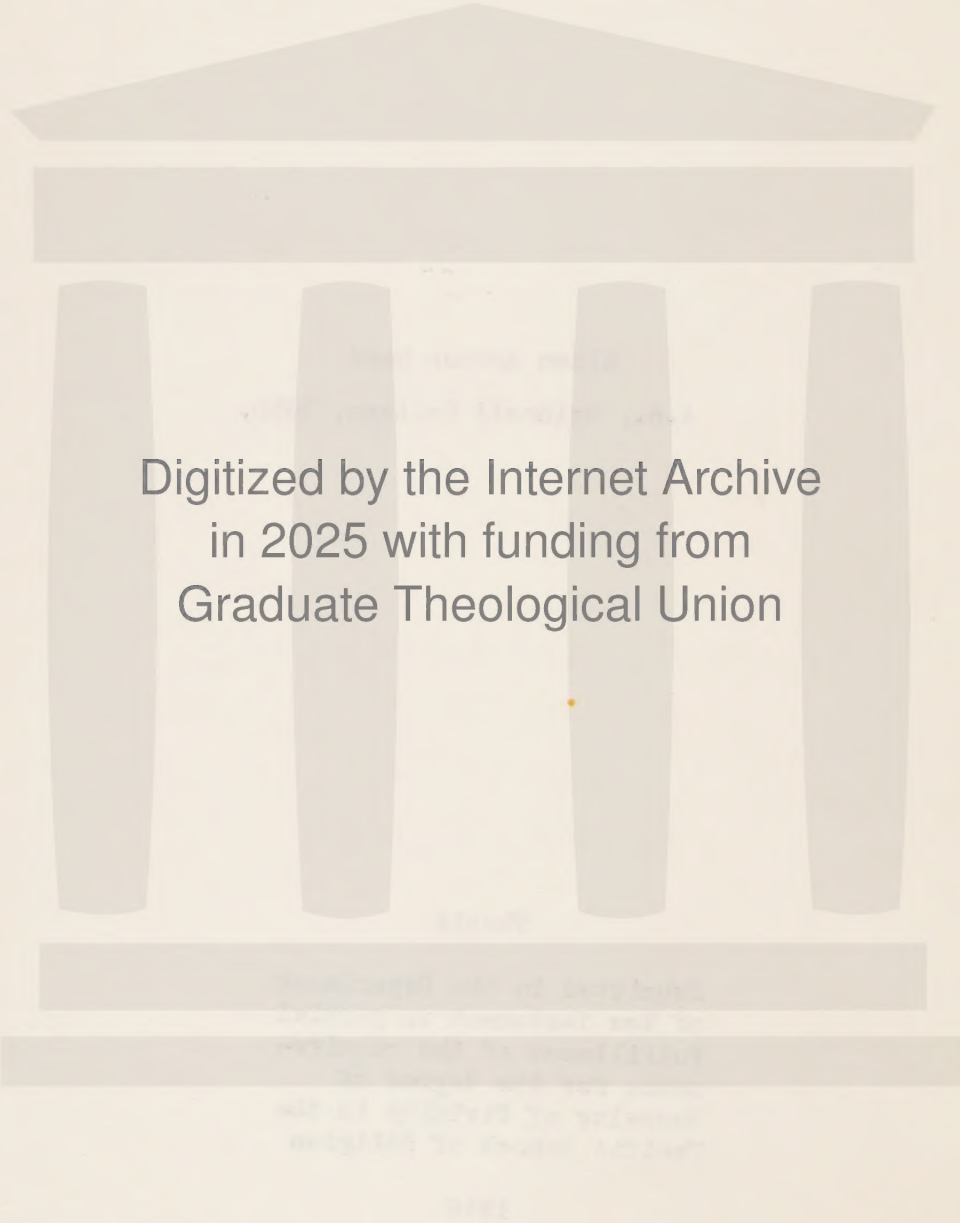
Alden Arthur Read

A.B., Grinnell College, 1930.

Thesis

Submitted in the Department
of New Testament in partial
fulfillment of the require-
ments for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity in the
Pacific School of Religion

1936



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Graduate Theological Union

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I -- The Need for Reconciliation	Page 1
CHAPTER II -- The Means of Reconciliation	17
CHAPTER III -- The Symbol of Reconciliation	33
CHAPTER IV -- The Ministry of Reconciliation	45

CHAPTER I

THE NEED FOR RECONCILIATION

It is impossible to conceive of a religion which does not take into consideration the doctrine of reconciliation. The apostle Paul must have had such a realization in his life for in his writing he has included many sayings regarding it. No doubt there were in Paul's time those who felt a tension between themselves and their environment, just as there are those in our present day who feel such a strain. The method by which man "puts an end to all the distressing disharmonies within his universe, and brings all under one effective rule,"¹ may be described as reconciliation. Men may understand in a very small measure the nature of their disharmonies and they may interpret them as physical in their origin, when as a matter of fact they are really ethical. They may feel that it is the moral order with which they are out of harmony, when it is in reality nothing more than their antagonism to a personal God who has failed to give them the peace after which they have so diligently been seeking.

In the world in which men live there must be that peace which makes men feel that they are at one with the

1. Abingdon Bible Commentary on Collossians, Chapter I:20.

world and with the existence of which men are a part, as well as the reconciliation from a purely Christian point of view. Only when the two are brought together in relation to one another do we think of them as being one.

When we come to the realm of religion in its highest form, that is when the problem of reconciliation becomes acute. The personal relations between God and man must then be considered. When the relationship between a personal God and man is interrupted by a man's own actions, it is then that the need for reconciliation arises.

Paul in his teachings discovered that Justification or the blotting out of sin was not enough but that something else, namely, reconciliation was also necessary. Behind these hostile spirit-forces from which Christ had redeemed men, was God. In committing a sin man found that he was not only committing a sin but cutting himself off from his God. As the apostle Paul puts it in Collossians 1:21, men were "alienated and enemies in their mind through wicked works." The personal God or Creator of the universe, according to Paul was one who 'made us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light' (Colossians 1:12) and 'who gave us the 'Son of his love,'....."that in him should all the fulness dwell." (Colossians 1:19) Therefore

to be estranged from God was to be estranged from every good thing. Man therefore had need of the reconciliation to readjust and restore the true personal relationship between himself and His maker.

The reconciliation therefore, is the fundamental and central experience in the life of every man. "Not only in the Christian religion but in heathenism has the necessity of reconciliation made itself felt. There is a witness within man, a witness whose voice has never been by any means completely silenced, a witness that testifies that it is impossible for man to.....obtain peace without reconciliation."¹

The Old Testament contains many accounts of men and women who felt that their happiness depended upon their right relationship to God. In other religions the same thing has been true. The many sacrifices which have been made, men and women tormenting themselves, many ceremonies having been performed, have all been attempts of the man to reconcile himself to his maker. According to Paul, this in fact is why Jesus himself came into the world, that the world might be reconciled. It is of the reconciliation with God through the death of Jesus Christ that

1. The Reconciliation by P. Waldenström. P. 8.

Paul speaks when he writes, "And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross." (Ephesians 2:16)

It has been stated above at the beginning of this chapter that it is impossible to conceive of a religion which does not take into account the doctrine of reconciliation. True, but as we study the various religions we find that as in Christianity the whole object of Christ's coming into the world was reconciliation, so in other great religions the idea of reconciliation has permeated nearly every one.

Men feel the need for reconciliation especially when coming in contact with death, or in the nearness to it. It is because they feel themselves standing before God, and their conscience tells them that they are in the wrong relationship with Him. Thus we find not only that the necessity for reconciliation is found in the scriptures but, that it is discovered in the conscience of men themselves. If this be true then the question which we must answer is this, whether it was God or man or both parties which must be reconciled. I think that the answer to this question may be found in the marriage problem as treated by the apostle Paul. "That the wife depart not from the husband, but should she depart let her remain

unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband, and that the husband leave not his wife." (I Cor. 7:11) Here we have a human example which helps us to understand this figure. "As an enemy man is estranged from God and separated from Him." (Col. 1:21) 'and through Christ we are again reconciled to God." (I Cor. 5:18ff) (Romans 5:10) It is not therefore to be thought that God is reconciled, but it is God who in Christ brings peace to us, transforming enemies into reconciled persons.

The question is of course the old Pauline problem as to whether God may be conceived as taking part with us against Himself. In seeking to discover whether the apostle regarded the relation between God and man as mutually hostile or as one of hostility on man's side only, we call attention to the uses of this word "enemy." There are three passages in which Paul uses the word in reference to this question. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God," (Romans 5:10) "you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works" (Colossians 1:21); "in the light of the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but in the light of election they are beloved for the fathers' sake," (Romans 11:28).

In the first two passages there can be little doubt

that Paul here means enemies of God. In the case of the third passage, scholars have believed that the passive form 'beloved' demands a passive meaning, 'hated' to balance it.¹ This does not suggest necessarily that God was hostile to His people. Paul's belief on the subject is probably that man is hostile yet beloved. 'Seen in the light of the Gospel, still hostile to God for your sakes: but in the light of election still beloved for the fathers' sakes.' When we were hostile, 'we were reconciled,' for 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'

The idea that God is described as hostile to men is thought to be confirmed by references which Paul makes to the 'wrath of God.' Directly or indirectly St. Paul connects God with the idea of anger or wrath some ten or eleven times. In six of these cases, i.e. Romans 3:5, 5:9, 2:5; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; Romans 12:19; I Thess. 1:10, reference is clearly to the Wrath 'in the great long suffering' of God. In three cases the same reference is less clearly expressed, (Romans 4:15; Eph. 2:3; I Thess. 5:9); two remain. 'The wrath of God is being revealed against all godlessness and wickedness' (Rom. 1:18; 'the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost,' (I Thess. 2:16).

1. Lietzmann, Handbook of the New Testament, ad Romans 11:28.

These passages which have just been considered provide us with little basis for the belief that the apostle represents God as hostile and requiring to be reconciled. According to the doctrine of Justification however, man is conceived as standing before God, but he is separated from Him by a terrible barrier. Paul therefore closely connects his Gospel with the necessity with which it has to deal, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the righteousness of God which is revealed....for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." (Romans 1:16-18) Paul sees the revelation of God's righteousness as the method of reconciliation, and righteousness is needed because of the revelation of his wrath. We require the Gospel therefore to keep from having to meet the wrath of God."....both the righteousness of God which constitutes the Gospel, and the wrath of God to which men are exposed apart from the Gospel are spoken of as revelations."¹ God is in and through each. Those who come in contact with the divine wrath must be divinely righteous to meet the situation which has been set forth by divine wrath. God therefore may not be conceived of as taking a part with us against

1. Denney, James, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, p. 142.

Himself, but that the Divine Wrath is revealing itself against every kind of sin.

Though in Paul we find no formal definition of sin, it is the starting point of his doctrine of reconciliation. As far as sin is concerned, there are two things in which the apostle is mainly interested. One is its universality, and the other is the hopelessness of the problem which it presents to men. Before he informs us how reconciliation is achieved by Christ, he shows us the whole universe guilty of sin before God, and subject to his judgment and wrath, and holding a great responsibility to God. (Romans 3:19) Paul in showing that the whole world is sinful implies that he himself is also guilty, but he goes further and his ideas of sin are deeply colored by his own experience with it. "In me," he says in Romans 7:16, "that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." Again, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." (u:8) In Galatians he also refers to the flesh. "The flesh lusteth after the spirit," (Galatians 5:17), and in verse 24, "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh."

There is one thing to be noted, however, regarding Paul's attitude concerning "the flesh." It may have a

physical basis or relation, but for Paul it only exists in his moral consciousness. This does not mean that we are not responsible for ourselves. When Paul uses the term flesh, he is trying to make us feel how deep and all pervading our responsibility is. The reality of sin and the reality of our own responsibility for it which tends to evoke the wrath of God is the presupposition of Paul's Gospel of reconciliation.

Above the implication has been made that Paul starts his doctrine of reconciliation with the question of sin. As a matter of fact, the reality of the forgiveness of sin and of the eternal worth of this experience supplies the basis of all theories of atonement, justification, sanctification, and reconciliation. In the idea of Atonement recourse is had to the practice of priestly mediation as a means of securing release from the consequences of our misdeeds. In the idea of Justification recourse is had to the methods of political jurisprudence as a means of securing the safety of the state and the well-being of its subjects against the menace of criminality. In the idea of Sanctification, recourse is had to the purificatory ceremonies by which people have sought to do away with moral degeneration, and ceremonial filth.

In the idea of reconciliation recourse is had to the idea of mediating mutual friend who brings two estranged friends back to mutual love and trust. In the idea of Forgiveness, recourse is had to the familiar and deeply cherished remembrance of the graciousness of one whom we have wronged."¹

Paul in his use of these doctrines however, made no distinction regarding the great spiritual truth which underlies these various metaphors. To him although they represented various points of view, nevertheless this one great spiritual truth was uppermost in the apostle's mind, namely, that each one of us who enters upon the better life does so by virtue of a communication to our hearts of the gracious divine will. It is sin which separates us from that gracious divine will.

It is interesting to observe Paul's definition of a Christian in connection with the reconciliation. The apostle describes the Christian as one who has received the reconciliation. Again, "All things are of God who reconciled us to himself through Christ." (Romans 5:10-11) Here again is the question as to whether reconciliation is conceived of as being brought about solely by a change in men, as is so often said, or is it mutual, in that

1. Cross, George, Christian Salvation. p. 170.

there is a changed attitude also on the part of God. The context favors the latter view. Men are "saved from the wrath of God," and are enemies in the sense of being objects of that wrath. Reconciliation therefore, must have fulfilled the conditions on which the wrath of God might no longer be directed toward sinful man as well as have secured a changed attitude toward God on Man's part. The reconciliation comes to man from God and is not due alone to the change which has come about in man.

Clearly discernable is the Godward aspect of the reconciliation, in Paul's doctrine. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." (II Cor. 5:18-20) The thought is more general as found in Colossians 1:20-22. "And through him to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, through him to reconcile all things upon the earth, or things in the heavens." This the apostle says is accomplished by the death of Christ, and His resurrection. In Ephesians 2:16 the death of Christ is regarded as a means of uniting Jew and Gentile.

It does become clear however, that from the usage which is made of the word "reconcile," that for Paul it is man and man only who is to be reconciled. The Godward aspect

of the reconciliation is there but it is man who is to be reconciled. When the apostle speaks of reconciliation the subject is always God and the object is always man. God takes the initiative, to be sure, but men allow God to reconcile them to Himself. Nowhere in the epistles of Paul do we read that God has been reconciled; it is always that 'God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.'

When speaking of the need for reconciliation we must emphasize the character of the process of forgiveness in order to get a clear-cut view of christian forgiveness as Paul saw it. According to the apostle man is a religious being who passes through two totally different stages. The first is the earthly stage. 'The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is of heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly, and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' (I Corinthians 15:47, 48, 49) The next is the psychical stage, (verse 46) 'Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual.'

The character of the first is animalism, unchecked by any practical knowledge of law. (Romans 7:7) Therefore

a man in that stage commits no sin, (verse 8) not till a law forbids lust, does the animal-man discover what lust is, or learn that it is wrong. When he does this however, he is ready for the psychical stage. The characteristic of this stage is law. The question concerning the law in connection with the reconciliation I shall take up in a later chapter, but it must be remembered that forgiveness implies responsibility to moral law. It has no connection with Legalism in the mind of Paul but as far as moral law is concerned there is no forgiveness without it. It is with this stage that we are primarily interested in this thesis.

Also in discussing the need of the reconciliation it is necessary to discover the apostle's meaning of the term salvation. The Pauline conception is similar to that of Jesus, with the emphasis placed on deliverance from sin and its realization in the life of holiness. "Its initial conditions are repentance, renunciation of sin and trust in the grace of God which has been manifested in Christ."¹

The apostle however develops more fully and with a greater variety of statement the general conception of

1. Stevens, The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, p. 54.

salvation unlike any other which the New Testament presents. His doctrine of salvation is more elaborate than any which has been presented by the primitive church, for these doctrines of the primitive church are by no means adequate, especially concerning the death of Jesus. There is one point upon which Paul is especially clear and that is that the primitive community had established a connection between the death of the Messiah and the salvation of man from sin. These are the apostle's words, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. (I Cor. 15:3)

In the above passage, the apostle represents a tradition which was held by the early church, namely that the Messiah's death was a means of the removal of sin. The emphasis which the apostle places upon the cross, in his doctrine of salvation is regarded as being in harmony with the teaching of the Primitive Christian Community.

Paul bases his doctrine of salvation of men upon the divine characteristics, in relation to the death of Christ. This idea the apostle no doubt found in Jesus' own words, regarding his death being necessary on behalf of men. For Paul the death of Christ is the primary saving

deed. The main purpose of the coming of Christ into the world was in order to atone for the sins of mankind through his death. The justification for this view, is, of course, Paul's belief that between God and man there is a mutual hostility, and that sinners are the objects of God's enmity. This idea has been touched upon previously in this chapter, therefore we will not attempt to discuss it further at this point.

Some scholars have felt that Paul's doctrine of salvation carries him to the point of view that Christ suffered the penalty of sin. If this be so, then Christ's sufferings must necessarily be penal, which of course in the strict sense of the word they were not. The term penal implies punishment, and punishment implies guilt. Christ knew no guilt in his own life. The apostle does however regard Christ's sufferings as serving the ends of punishment as a substitute for the apprehension of the world's sin.

The apostle Paul believed that Christ's sufferings were representatively penal and involved penal consequences. He took the sinner's place and endured death, and by doing so met the moral ends of punishment, but it is clear that there could have been no moral qualities of punishment

for Him, since He knew no sin, nor could God have had a revengeful feeling toward Him personally.

In Paul's doctrine of salvation we find that a redeeming significance is attached to the resurrection, as well as to the death of Christ. 'For their sakes he died and rose again.' (II Cor. 5:15) In other words Christ rose on their behalf, and for their salvation. Again, 'He was raised for our justification.' (Romans 4:25) 'Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' (Romans 10:9) 'And if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection from the dead....if Christ hath not been raised then our preaching is vain, your faith is also vain. Yea we are found false witness of God.' (I Cor. 15:14-15) Thus the resurrection supplies the apostle with arguments by which he preaches the salvation or the moral renewal of mankind.

It is through man's sin therefore that the need for reconciliation exists, and by the death and resurrection of Christ is man saved, or in other words brought into harmony again with his God and the universe in which he lives. This is the need of the reconciliation as Paul sees it.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANS OF RECONCILIATION

'When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.' (Romans 5:10) In the preceding chapter man's need of reconciliation has been presented. The need for reconciliation as we have seen lies in man, and in his relation to God as affected by sin. By what means is this harmonious relationship effected? Through the death of Christ, God opens the way for man to enter into a new relation to himself. Instead of the former relation of hostility, a new relation has become possible. Instead of the 'wrath of God' against the sins of man, on God's part, when man has overcome that sin and is reconciled to God there is favor on the part of God. On the part of man there is obedience, instead of rebellion. In view of what Christ has done for man God ceases to reckon sin to his account. Regarding this the apostle says, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.' (II Cor. 5:19) Since by his death the divine righteousness, which is the

principle of penalty, has been adequately expressed and the divine displeasure vindicated, God may now restrain the operation of his wrath against sinners and open the way for acceptance and forgiveness. 'Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.' (II Cor. 5:21) The phrase 'He made to be sin' does not mean that Christ sinned. Christians have always held the view which the apostle found in the first part of the passage just quoted, 'He knew no sin.' Paul constantly defines Christ's death in relation to sin and it is obvious from reading this passage and others found in the Epistle to the Galatians or to the Romans that this phrase, 'He made to be sin' means 'He died for our Sins.' When Christ died on the cross, the death in which sin had involved all, then it was in that sense that God made Him to be sin for all. In other words to use a quotation from James Denney, "He saved Human nature, in His own person, in order that it might subsequently be saved in the persons of others. Christ Himself illustrates not only what it is to be saved, indeed it is only the Christ in whom the human nature which He has assumed is saved who is able to be the Savior."¹ Jesus was

1. Denney, James, Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, p. 244.

for Paul the Lord because he was the Savior. The title Lord we find frequently in the Pauline passages, but in the manner in which the apostle uses it we understand when we read, 'The One who by His death has earned the place of sovereign in my heart, and whom I feel constrained to worship and serve with all my heart and mind. Such is the connection of thought in such texts as Galatians 6:14 and Romans 5:1.

The doctrine of Christ's Person in these Epistles is no mere theological speculation, it is the outgrowth of Paul's own personal religious experience, the consciousness of personal redemption. His whole manner of conceiving Christ's redemptive work gave to the apostle certain inevitable conceptions concerning the person of Christ. For example his vision on the way to Damascus Paul became convinced that Jesus was the Christ. From this conviction the inference immediately followed that Jesus must have suffered on the cross not for His own sin but for the sin of the world, the choice, from the apostle's point of view, in the connection between sin and death, lying between these two alternatives. For Paul, Christ became the vicarious Sufferer. This character of vicariousness cannot be confined however to the Passion. It must be extended

to the whole earthly experience of Jesus. That experience of Jesus was full of indignities, all of which must be considered as vicarious, and therefore redemptive in nature. Christ became a Redeemer by subjection to humiliation. Each element in His humiliation made its own contribution to the redemption, procuring for men a benefit corresponding to its nature--redemption from Legalism or in other words by the Redeemer's subjection to law. Christ's humiliation was an appointment by God, but it was also Christ's own act. He humbled Himself; His whole earthly experience was a long course of self-humiliation, and the redemption He achieved was a redemption by self-humiliation.

Although the character of vicariousness on the part of Christ, cannot be confined to His death, nevertheless, it is an important factor in the doctrine of reconciliation as set forth by Paul. What then are the relations in which the apostle defines the death of Christ?

In the first place, Paul defines it by the relation to the love of God. The death of Christ was a demonstration as far as the apostle was concerned of that love. He says in Romans 5:7f., 'Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for the good man possibly one might dare

even death; but God commends his love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.' The interpretation of Christ's death through the love of God is fundamental in St. Paul. In whatever other relations he may define it, it is necessary for us to assume, that the other relations are consistent with this. Many theologians believe that the propitiatory doctrine of the death of Christ is inconsistent with the love of God and as it is inconsistent, it is out of harmony with the teaching of Jesus on the love of God. To Paul it seems to be the supreme proof of it.

Again, the apostle defines Christ's death by relation to the love of Christ. 'The Son of God loved me,' he says, 'and gave Himself for me.' (Galatians 2:20) 'The love of Christ constraineth us, because, we thus judge, that one died for all.' (I Cor. 5:14) 'Walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.' (Eph. 5:2) Christ is not the instrument, but the agent, of the Father in all that He does. The acts of God are the acts of Christ, and the motives are the same. The Father and the Son are at one in the work of the salvation of man. It is this which is expressed in the work of Christ as it

is described in Phil. 2:8, as obedience--obedience unto death, and that the death of the Cross. Again in Romans 5:19, 'For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of one shall the many be made righteous.' According to the apostle, the obedience is conceived as obedience to the loving will of the Father to save men. In His obedience in which He makes His great sacrifice, Christ is fulfilling the will of God.

We find Paul also relating the death of Christ to sin. Through the death of Christ man's sin is taken away. It was sin which caused death in the first place, and not something else, necessary as a demonstration of God's love and Christ's. As to why this was so, the apostle answers that because sin had involved us in death and there was no possibility of Christ's dealing with sin effectually except by taking our responsibility on himself, in other words dying for it. Death, according to Paul is the word which sums up the whole liability of man in relation to sin, and therefore when Christ came to give Himself for our sins He did it by dying. The term "death" as used by the apostle is often misleading. However, Paul does not so much try to define death as to have in mind the

fact of the crucifixion, and everything physical and spiritual which made it real. In other words the bearing of the sin and the expiation for it. He did not take into consideration the fact as to whether it was either impossible or unnecessary.

We have considered in general the different relations in which the apostle defines the death of Christ. Let us go further and examine the teachings in detail as based on his epistles. In I Thessalonians 5:10 we find this passage, "God did not appoint us to wrath, but to the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him." What did Christ do for us with a view to reconciliation? Paul's answer was, He died for us, and he did this because it was determined for Him by sin. The latter part of the above passage, namely, 'that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him' carries with it the idea that Christ's power to redeem men is dependent upon His making all our experience his own. This same suggestion is carried out in Romans 14:9. 'To this end Christ died and lived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.' Paul here does not allude to the fact that the 'wages of sin is death,'

but we doubt whether the apostle ever made reference to the death of Christ without calling to mind the propitiatory character of this death.

Passing to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, we find the gospel referred to as 'the word of the cross.' The apostle works to this end that 'the cross of Christ may not be made void' (1:17). In other passages he refers to the death of Christ in general terms which suggest the cost at which man's reconciliation is achieved. For example in chapter 6:20 and in chapter 7:23, he writes, 'Ye were bought with a price.' Paul believed that salvation was not a thing which could be assumed, but that the work of man's salvation was a costly work, and no matter how we may conceive of it, it is represented by the death of Christ. As Bushnell has put it, "The cost had to be made and actually was made, that men might be redeemed for God."¹

When speaking of the death of Christ, with reference to the reconciliation we must refer also to the tenth and eleventh chapter of First Corinthians in which Paul speaks of the Sacraments. He refers to the apparent carelessness on the part of the people with which they go into temptation, relying on the Sacraments to ensure them against peril. The Sacraments had a large place in the Church at

1. Bushnell, H., Forgiveness and Law.

Corinth, and a significance which cannot be exaggerated, and when St. Paul speaks of the Sacraments he interprets them with relation to the death of Christ. Paul speaks of Baptism into Christ. By this he means baptism into His death.

The idea of baptism carries with it always the significance of the forgiveness of sins. As the rite which marks the believer's initiation into the new covenant, it is essentially related to the act on which the covenant is based, the death of Christ. The Supper, again of which the apostle speaks at length in the tenth chapter of First Corinthians bears an unmistakable reference to Christ's death. The cup is specially defined as the new covenant in His blood, and the apostle sums up the meaning of the Sacrament in the words "As often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup ye do publish the Lord's death till He come." (I Cor. 11:26) St. Paul puts the gospel into both of the sacraments. If Baptism is relative to forgiveness of sins, so is the Supper. In both the sacraments, the Christ to whom we enter into relation is Christ who died.

Regarding the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, we find it of supreme importance. In chapter 5, St. Paul

defends the apostolic office against the assaults of his enemies. In doing so his motive is that which we find in his words. 'The love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that one died for all (so then all died) and died for all that they who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them, and rose again.' The importance of this passage is that it brings together the two relations in which St. Paul is in the habit of defining the death of Christ--its relation to the love in which it originated and to the sin with which it dealt. The death of Christ, enables us to see that so far as men were concerned it was a loving death, only because in it He took the responsibility of the reconciliation upon Himself.

Let us examine this passage more fully. The apostle writes, 'One died for all (so then all died).' The inference here is that the death of Christ for all involved the death of all. It is in the inclusive character in the death of Christ, 'that his death has in it a power to put constraint on men to live for Him.'¹ What is this power in the death of Christ? For the apostle it is the constraining influence for men against sin. If it is our

1. Athanasius, The Incarnation, Chapter 20, Paragraph 5.

death that Christ died on the Cross, there is in the Cross the constraint of an infinite love which the apostle fully realized. "Christ in His love dies for us; but this will avail nothing and produce no result unless by faith we die in Him and with Him. Atonement is made not only by the blood of Christ but also by the faith of the sinner. Faith is not only the condition of the subjective efficacy of atonement, it is also the essential means whereby atonement is effected."¹ Thus Christ's death must be equivalent to the death of us all, it was the death of all men which was died by Him.

The death of Christ is the means of reconciliation, but this is not the full reconciliation. Having died with Christ by faith, the sinner becomes a new individual, rises with Him, by faith, to a new life, the life of the Spirit. As the apostle puts it, 'Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature, the old things are passed away, behold they are become new.' (II Cor. 5:17)

It is in the resurrection of Christ that we see the full work of the reconciliation. It was no less necessary than the death itself, for had not Christ risen we too would have been left in death, or in other words left

1. Sabatier, Auguste, The Atonement, p. 45.

in sin. It is the resurrection which introduces us into new life, and by putting an end to the period of the reign of the law, of sin and the flesh, the spirit and eternal life come into being.

In discussing the question of the means of reconciliation one must take into account also the matter of the law. As Horace Bushnell has stated, "Forgiveness puts a man personally right with God, but it does not put him right with law and it is not easy to see that anything can."¹ Forgiveness according to Paul means freedom from the law. Forgiveness which stands in the heart of the Christian Spirit is synonymous with liberation from law and its consequences as such (Romans 8:22). 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of Sin and death. If ye are led by the spirit ye are not under law.' (Gal. 5:18) Law and legalism were inadequate to express God's dealing with the race. The glory of God, Paul believed, was to be seen not in vindicative justice, it was to be seen in Christ's own person. The apostle was convinced of this. Whatever the powers of evil in the world might be, 'none could separate him from the Love of God revealed in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

1. Bushnell, Horace, Forgiveness and Law, p. 93.

Paul did not interpret Christ's death by law, for had he done so he could not have found God in Christ in his own life. The penal theory subordinates God's grace to His penal justice; in other words, the law held that only when the claims of justice had been met, could God's grace be shown.

Jesus himself in His teaching of God was not new entirely. He expressed much of it in terms of the framework of Jewish Legalism, and Apocalyptic thought. Yet the God whom Jesus proclaimed was not the arbitrary God of Jewish Legalism. As Paul thought of Jesus teaching, he did not think of a God who clothes the flowers and grass of the field and who feeds the birds of the heavens as a God of law preparing vengeance upon His enemies.

It may be said however, that the doctrine of the law as presented by Paul is not as vital to his doctrine of reconciliation as many would have us believe. There are interpreters who put it in the forefront of the gospel. The chief difficulty regarding the controversy is that Paul preaches Christ as the propitiation to all men alike, Gentiles as well as Jews, and he trusts as does every evangelist, to something in the common conscience, not to any Jewish idea about the Mosaic law, to bear witness

to its truth. When he argues in the third chapter of Galatians, that Christ became a curse for us, that is, in the first instance for the Jews through His crucifixion, because the law of Moses says, "Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree," it is quite in evidence that his argument is unequal to his thought. It is not the Jewish Law in the legal sense, to which justice is done in the propitiation, though no doubt Paul would have admitted that the propitiation has its application at this point. It is the law in the large sense of the ethical necessity which determines all of the relations between God and man. Above we said that Paul taught freedom from the law. However in the fullest sense Paul had the profoundest reverence for the law. He knew that it could never be treated as though it never existed, not even by God, in the act of forgiveness. Law when applied in the universal sense is the very element of the spiritual life which is common to God and man, and Paul no doubt guarded its sanctity. Paul pays homage to it in the propitiation of Christ, and homage is also paid in the judgment which God renders to man according to his works. This does not say that any statute may contribute to put us right with God, but it is always in harmony with the constitution of a moral world

in which God and man live together.

Paul's doctrine of course would be imperfect, that is the doctrine of reconciliation, if it did not emphasize the absoluteness or finality. "There is not therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," says the apostle. The man who has absolute belief in Christ is right with God. In him through Christ there is a love or an assurance of God's love which triumphs over everything. Nothing can discomfort him not even death. This is the ideal which the apostle expresses in the eighth chapter of Romans, in which for Paul this thing seems to have its full realization.

"But," says Denny, "this life at once divine and human is not yet consummated, nay, it is not lifted above all risks and uncertainties. We are saved in hope. The final sentence of judgment has not yet been pronounced, and we look with eagerness, for it. With eagerness, but not with misgiving, for faith and the Spirit bring the future into the present and give us an earnest of what is to come, and by grasping the eternal love of God in Christ the propitiation for sin, raise us effectively above all that is disconcerting or disquieting in time. In this respect Paul's doctrine of the reconciled or justified life is like

every other which recognizes that both time and eternity are modes in which life has to be lived. The doctrine-- of reconciliation to God, or acceptance with Him once for all, on the ground of abandoning self to His sin-bearing love in Christ--answers to the eternal aspect, and it is necessary if there is to be such a thing in life as that joyful assurance which is so characteristic of the New Testament."¹

Thus the reconciliation of the individual has been connected with the whole life of Christ, in his death, resurrection and in every phase of the person of Christ. The individual who knows himself reconciled finds himself in the community founded by Christ and reckons himself as belonging to it. Through Christ we are reconciled to God.

1. Denney, J., The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation.

CHAPTER III

THE SYMBOL OF RECONCILIATION

In the preceding chapter mention has been made of the death of Jesus, but very little has been said regarding the actual symbol of the reconciliation, namely the Cross of Christ. George Adam Smith in his description of the way in which sinful men come into the experience of divine forgiveness says, "At the foot of Christ's Cross they have known a conscience of sin, a horror of it, and by consequence a penitence for their own share in it, deeper than anything else has started in human experience. And as thus their whole spiritual nature has been roused, and they wakened to the truth of it would not have been safe, nor in any wise morally well, for them to have been forgiven by mere clemency and without feeling what sin costs, they have their Substitute."¹

It is safe to say then that no one who receives a forgiveness which has come through the hands of the Christ, can think lightly of what sin is, or can he fail to get a glimpse of the tremendous price which his forgiveness has cost. When we think of this price we cannot help but wonder

1. The Forgiveness of Sins and Other Sermons, p. 112.

why it was that Jesus allowed himself to submit to the cross? In other words why was it necessary for the divine love to express itself in this particular way? It is of course true that the cross in itself is only a symbol of the reconciliation and the only thing which Jesus did in connection with it is to die upon it. The manner of his death was but incidental, the significant thing being the fact of his death. Why Christ should come under the law of sin and of death is the thing which excites our wonder. While the form of His death was not essential, the form which it took was the thing which gave it a peculiar significance. Paul states the wonder of it in Phil. 2:8 when he writes, "He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross." The apostle here affords us evidence that Jesus went the full limit for man's reconciliation. The manner in which Jesus was crucified is of course one which adds to the bitterness of it all, and it was a shameful death, for under the refinement of Roman cruelty, it bore the stamp of national degradation. That Christ was "able to endure the cross, despising shame," is evidence of a complete triumph, which shows the depths of an all inclusive love.

Had Christ died a natural death in the quiet of the

home of a friend no doubt the power of it would have been lost to a great extent. By his violent death at the hands of enemies the world's attention was aroused and some adequate explanation was necessary. The delivering up of Christ was no doubt divinely determined, but His crucifixion was something for which men were responsible. What God had determined, men carried out unconsciously, and the manner in which they carried it out furthered Christ's redemptive mission. This symbol of reconciliation, the cross, men believed would be the end of the power of Christ. It was not the end, but merely the beginning, as has been proved.

Whether Jesus Himself recognized that a violent death was necessary to bring all men unto Himself, is a question upon which scholars disagree, and which I shall not attempt to answer here. It seems likely however that he did have a consciousness within Himself that by dying openly before the eyes of the world he would exercise magnetic power, because His death would stand out as the crowning act of human sacrifice. He no doubt recognized also that His reconciling power would increase as men more fully understood the meaning of his death upon the cross.

There are two things which scholars recognize as symbolical in the cross, or in other words the death of

Christ. One is that it is revelatory, and the second is that it is instrumental. It is revelatory in the sense that it affords a complete revelation of God's love so that man might be reconciled to Him. In it the love of God is made visible, the Divine heart is disclosed. It reveals to us a God who took no account of cost, a God whose sorrow and suffering were measureless because His love was measureless. It shows us how far a Divine love could go. As the apostle put it, "He emptied himself of all but love, when he became obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross." By his death on the Cross He took away all barriers between man and Himself. Says Sabatier, "The death of Christ was a blow which broke the alabaster box and set free the divine perfume of his heart, which was renunciation, sacrifice, love."¹

The revelation of a Divine love comes first and stands the highest in human need. In fact, revelation is necessary to reconciliation. Because man needs to know God and because he wants to be known and loved, God has taken pains to reveal Himself through the Cross.

The cross is not only revealing in the love of God, but it is also revealing of the righteousness of God. As

1. Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit.
p. 274.

Paul put it, Christ was set forth by God "to be propitiatory through faith in His blood to shew His righteousness, because of the passing over of sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." In this passage found in Romans 2:25, Paul declares the Atonement to have retrospective force, demonstrating God's righteousness, in His merciful forbearance with sinful men in the past, and by equality of reasoning, demonstrating His forbearance with them in the present. The cross is God's method of justifying Himself in the eyes of the moral universe in His forgiveness of sin. It shows the hostility of the Divine nature to sin, and it shows that the world is ruled in righteousness, and that in all God does, the ends of righteousness are met, and the divine mercy is perseverent.

The cross, as we have already mentioned above is instrumental in its symbolism, as well as revelatory. This is where the real reconciliation takes place it seems to me, in that it is the weapon which God uses to do away with man's sin and disharmony so that he is brought into right relationship with His God and His universe. The divine love is set free in the way best fitted to make it redemptively effective. Through the cross, God acts directly upon the human heart, and makes his appeal to the deepest in

human nature. As someone has said, "He reveals love that He may evoke it. He shows His heart that He may woo and win man to himself. He is mighty to save because he is mighty to love."¹

When speaking of the cross as a symbol of reconciliation and forgiveness, it must be mentioned that the position taken by many with reference to the cross as a supreme manifestation of Divine love is that forgiveness has no vital connection with Christ's death on the Cross, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son is pointed to as proof of this fact. "It is true," says Mackintosh, "that the parable says nothing of the cross, as indeed for that matter it says nothing of Jesus. Apart from such details, however, and also of the fact that there is something curiously mechanical in the idea that after a certain point no further truth, say, regarding the cost of redemption, could reach the believing mind, there are still good grounds for interpreting the cross as the medium of pardon, and this not despite God's love but because of it."² Christ in His death upon the cross therefore connects Himself with the greatest need of human life in lifting the soul from a chaotic sinful state into a state of righteousness.

1. Source unknown.

2. Mackintosh, The Christian Experience of Forgiveness.

Stevens has given us an interesting arrangement of the passages from Paul in connection with the death of Christ on the cross, which will give us a fuller understanding of the apostle's point of view. He divides the passages into three classes. First, "Those which simply connect Christ's death with salvation from sin." "Who died for us that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." (I Thess. 5:10) "Who gave himself (that is gave himself up to death) for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world." (Galatians 1:4) "Who was delivered up (to death) on account of our trespasses." (Romans 4:25) "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:3) "He that spared not his own Son but delivered him up (to death) for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us these things?.....Who is he that shall condemn? (No one shall) for it is Christ who died." (Romans 8:32) "One died for all therefore all died." (II Cor. 5:15) "For to this end Christ died, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living." (Romans 19:9) "Christ has blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us.....nailing it to the cross." (Col. 2:14)

At this point I should like to interrupt the classification for a moment to point out the conclusion which we may draw from these passages as to whether or not in the cross of Christ there is any forgiveness with relation to condemnation of sin. For the answer to this inquiry again we turn to Mackintosh who writes, "The love of God is holy, majestic, awe inspiring and august; nor can any love possess the respect of moral beings which lacks this self-maintaining stringency. Holiness is the austere element in love, preserving it from wrong. We are able to speak separately of the two things, love and holiness, because in men they often seem distinct; but in God they are indistinguishable. There are principles of righteousness native to the love of God, and in dealing with the sinful He acts in harmony with these principles, not against them. Forgiveness can be taken by the living conscience only as it comes through Judgment, and it is part of the Christian conception of God that He forgives in such wise as will not foster the seeds of evil within us. Hence in God's nature there is what may be called a moral necessity that pardon should be mediated through active condemnation. He so reveals Himself in the cross that His mind about sin is unequivocally disclosed; the world is shown how awful

goodness is."¹

The second classification of the passages by Paul on the cross deals with those which, "express the idea of redemption or deliverance of men as by purchase." "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law," etc. (Galatians 3:13) "God sent forth his Son....that he might redeem those under the law." (Galatians 4:4) "In whom we have our redemption," the forgiveness of our sins. (Col. 1:13, Eph. 1:7) "Ye are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6:20, 7:23, I Timothy 2:6, and Tit. 2:14, where the figure of a ransom is employed.) "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth as a propitiation, through faith, by his blood, to show his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God for the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.

The third classification deals directly with the "reconciliation between God and men by the death of Christ," on the cross. There are some of these passages which will have been duplicated above, but for the purposes of

1. Mackintosh, H. R., The Christian Experience of Forgiveness, pp. 217, 218.

clarification and in following the arrangement which Stevens gives, we shall repeat them here. "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled shall we be saved by his life; and not only so but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation." (Romans 5:10,11)

"But all things are of God who reconciled us through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." (II Cor. 5:18-20) Beside this passage should be placed Col. 1:20-22, where Christ is spoken of as reconciling all things unto God, whether things on earth or in the heavens, making peace between himself and them by the blood of his cross, and also as reconciling the readers who had formerly been enemies, through his death. Also, Eph. 2:16 where Jews and Gentiles are said to have been reconciled and united through the cross. "These are the passages from which

Paul's doctrine of the saving import of Christ's death, (on the cross) must be derived."¹

Thus we have gained the point where we may understand what the symbol of the cross means in the doctrine of the reconciliation as presented by Paul. According to the apostle, if Jesus had turned back from the cross, he would have had no salvation to offer, because there would have been no death and no resurrection. It was upon the death and resurrection that the reconciliation of man depended, according to the apostle, as we have already noted from his writings. If Jesus had turned back from the cross, the fathomless gulf which separated man and God could never have been bridged.

The Cross of Calvary represented to Paul the highest pinnacle of human achievement. He realized that the deepest joy and the fullest self-realization came only through self-renunciation. Man, Paul believed, was made in the spiritual image of the Creator and was capable of rising Godward.

No doubt Page believed with Paul when he wrote, "No man understands the full meaning of the Cross. We know too little of God and of life to comprehend clearly

1. Stevens, G. B., The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, p. 409.

the significance of this supreme event of all time.

But at least this we do know, the Cross reveals the hideousness of sin, releases the redeeming power of sacrificial love, and opens the gateway to abounding joy and complete self-realization. Here we find the answer to the supreme needs of every generation: How to overcome evil and build the divine society, and how to find happiness and serenity."¹

According to Paul, to redeem a world and to lead them to realize the righteousness which God requires, is well worth the price paid by Christ on the cross. In the lives of men who are reconciled God "sees the fruit of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied." The Cross never fails in any case when it has a chance to operate. The Cross has been a symbol of the reconciliation, but it has also been a symbol of victory. "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory, Oh death where is thy sting?.....but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:55-57)

1. Page, Kirby, Jesus or Christianity, p. 52.

CHAPTER IV

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

The New Testament idea of reconciliation carries with it the concept that the work of Christ must be finished before there can be any reconciliation. Paul's attitude was that unless we can preach a finished work of Christ in relation to sin then we have no real gospel for sinful men at all. "It is not," says Denney, "in something Christ would fain do that we see His love, it is only through what he had already done that we can form any idea or come to any conviction of what he would fain do. He has died for us all and by that death, not His own, properly speaking, but the death of the sinful race taken Himself, He has so demonstrated the reality and infinity of the love of God to the sinful, as to make it possible for apostles and evangelists to preach peace to all men through Him."¹

"We are ambassadors therefore," says Paul, "on behalf of Christ as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." (II Corinthians 5:20) In the preceding verses

1. Denney, James, The Death of Christ, p. 147.

of this chapter the apostle has set forth the idea that it was God who dwelt and worked in Christ, and that his work in Christ aimed at the reconciliation of the whole world to himself. Every man's reconciliation to God is therefore a work of God himself through Christ, (Verse 18).

After the apostle himself had been reconciled, he had from the same God received 'the word of reconciliation, (Verse 19). And now the apostle was an ambassador of God for the sake of Christ. An ambassador must deliver the words of his sender to him whom they concern. His business is not to think out something of his own, but with faithfulness to set forth the words which have been given to him. It is not his business to defend the words of the sender but only to present them correctly. In this sense the apostle Paul carried the message of Christ to the people of his time. He writes, "When ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God which also worketh in you that believe." (I Thess. 2:13) Again he says, "All things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation." (II Cor. 5:18) Therefore says the apostle, "Seeing that we have this

ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we faint not, but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (II Cor. 4:1-3) "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." (II Cor. 4:5)

What then is the ministry of reconciliation as Paul sees it? In other words the purpose of God in the world. I believe that Campbell has given us the answer to this when he writes, "....God's eternal purpose is the reconciliation of all things to Himself by Jesus Christ, (and) the fusion of the kingdoms of this world into a universal kingdom of righteousness. To accomplish this purpose is the ultimate end of redemption."¹ As the apostle has stated, "God hath made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to the good pleasure which he purposed in him, unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times to sum up all things in Christ, the things in heaven and the things upon the earth." (Col. 1:18)

"The kingdom," again writes Campbell, "which is the

1. Campbell, M., The Heart of the Gospel, p. 219.

final goal towards which the redeeming energy of Christ is working is called the 'Kingdom of God,' because God is the source and centre....The Kingdom has already come in every home, in every domain of social life where Christ's love rules the heart."¹

The kingdom of love as we know it today however, was not the kingdom of love which the apostle taught. Paul's business was to preach the love of God through Christ, which means that he cared little for the social aspect of the Gospel of Love as taught by Jesus Christ. "In establishing the kingdom of love," further writes Campbell, "Jesus had in view the completion of a purpose. Redemption was no afterthought. It was eternal as God Himself; and the cross was the predestined method of bringing it to realization."¹

If then the gospel of love as preached by Paul is not the gospel of love as we know it today, let us therefore turn at this point to our present day as ministers of reconciliation.

We cannot however, disregard the spiritual element in Paul's gospel for the individual. But the apostle did not go far enough, the love of God ceased with the individual

1. Campbell, M., The Heart of the Gospel, p. 221.

whereas the individual should have been a channel whereby the love of God flowed through him to the world at large.

If salvation means anything to us, "it is not," writes Page, "release from future punishment or the enjoyment of eternal bliss. Salvation is reconciliation, (but it is also) appreciation; reconciliation with God and man, appreciation of the good, the true and the beautiful. A man is saved when he shuns unfilial and antisocial attitudes and practices.....Salvation is not an act, it is a process.....If we give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, welcome to the stranger, clothes to the naked, relief to the sick, kindness to the prisoner, we are being saved. When we fail to live as if the Family of God is a present reality we are being lost."¹

The contrast between the Doctrine of Salvation as proclaimed by Paul and that which we understand as Salvation in our present day, may be found in a statement made by Walter Rauschenbusch in speaking of the word "faith." He says, "Through the experience and influence of Paul the word "faith," has gained a central place in the terminology of salvation. Its meaning fluctuates according to the dominant conception of religion. With Paul it was

1. Page, Kirby, Jesus or Christianity, p. 45.

a comprehensive mystical symbol covering his whole inner experience of salvation and emancipation, which flooded his soul with joy and power. On the other hand wherever doctrine becomes rigid and is the preeminent thing in religion, "faith" means a submission of the mind to the affirmations of dogma and theology, and in particular, acceptance of the plan of salvation and trust in the vicarious atonement of Christ."¹

As we have already stated, salvation is not a release from future punishment or the enjoyment of eternal bliss. It is an attitude of love in which men freely co-ordinate life with the life of their fellow men, "in obedience to the loving impulses of the spirit of God, thus taking their part in a divine organism of mutual service."²

As ambassadors of God and ministers of reconciliation the problem which confronts us is this question of how the attitude of love in which men freely co-ordinate life with the life of their fellow men may be brought about?

Paul in his doctrine of reconciliation, as we have stated in a previous chapter, finds sin as the basic

1. Rauschenbusch, W., The Theology of the Social Gospel, p. 101.
2. Ibid, p. 98.

problem underlying the need of reconciliation. It was however to individuals that he refers. It is with sin also that we begin our ministry of reconciliation in our present day, but we go beyond the individual to the sins of society. Before there is any permanent reconciliation among individuals men and women as social groups must find the complete dedication of self and utter reliance upon the way of love as the essential method of salvation.

The evils of which we speak are those which have always beset society and the individuals in it, since the time of the ministry of Jesus. When we consider the death of Jesus on the cross we must recognize that it was these public sins which combined to bring about this supreme tragedy. The sins of individuals against which the apostle preached have contributed to the larger social evils. We may therefore, causally connect the doctrine of reconciliation as presented by Paul with the social teachings of Jesus. These evils were not of course as fully developed in Paul's time as they are today, but they have always contributed to the need for man's reconciliation. For the very fine way in which these sins are brought out and discussed we are indebted to Dr. Rauschenbush. There are six which he has enumerated.



The first is what Rauschenbush calls religious bigotry. Regarding this he states, "Religious bigotry has been one of the permanent evils of mankind, the cause of untold social division, bitterness, persecution, and religious wars. It is always a social sin.....Innumerable individuals contribute their little quota to make up this collective evil, and when once the common mind is charged with it, it gets innumerable outlets. This sin, then, was borne by Jesus, not by imputation, nor by sympathy, but by direct experience." Again he writes, "Jesus was killed by ecclesiastical religion."¹

The second of the social evils which contributed to the death of Christ, and one which is ever present with us today is that of political graft and power. "Those who are in control of the machinery of organized society are able to use it for selfish and predatory ends, turning into private profit what ought to serve the common good.....There is always an oligarchy, wherever you look; monarchical and republican forms of government are both protective devices for the group that controls things. This group is universal government. For every oligarchy political power is convertible into financial income and

1. Rauschenbush, W., The Theology for the Social Gospel.
p. 250.

social influence, thus satisfying the power double instinct for money and for power."¹

The third evil is that of the corruption of justice. The Old Testament prophets preached against it. It was the center of the teachings of Christ. As for this evil Rauschenbush writes, "Injustice between man and man is inevitable and bad enough. But it is far worse when the social institution set up in the name of justice, gives its support to injustice. What nation can claim to be free from this?" Jesus himself was a victim of the courts of injustice, and because of them he was forced to bear the cross.

Mob spirit and mob action contributed to the death of Jesus, and it is a fourth permanent sin of society toward which our ministry of reconciliation is directed. "The mob spirit is the social spirit gone mad. The social group then escapes from the control of the wiser and fairer habits, and is lashed into action by primitive passions. The social spirit reacts so powerfully on individuals, that the restraints of self criticism and self control are shot back....So this pervasive sin of community life, the intoxication of the social spirit, before

1. Rauschenbush, W., The Theology for the Social Gospel.

which so many prophets and semi-prophets have had to quail, contributed to the death of Jesus. He bore it, not by sympathy or imputation, but by experience.

Organized society is beset by a fifth sin known as Militarism. It was in evidence in the prophet's time for he said, "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." We are familiar with the reactions of war. They are as dangerous to society as the direct effects. Jesus fell into the hands of the war system when he fell into the hands of the Roman soldiers. As Rauschenbush has put it, "The men who drove the spikes through his hands and feet were the equivalent of a firing-squad off duty at an execution, and when they gambled for his clothes, they were taking their soldiers' perquisites."

The last of the group of social sins which contributes to the forces of the kingdom of evil is that of class contempt. In other words racial hatred. "It is almost universal. Our class pride, and its obverse passion, are the necessary spiritual product of class divisions. They are the direct negation of solidarity and love. They substitute a semi-human, semi-democratic, semi-ethical relation for full human fraternity."

This sin has always been a weight upon mankind, and

when Jesus went to his death upon the cross, it was not the physical pain which he bore so much as the contempt of the lower classes which has always crippled self-respect and spiritualization of human existence.

It is the sum of these six barriers therefore which keeps mankind from the fullest realization of the kingdom of God. Without this realization there can be no harmony in the universe. Where there is no harmony there is no reconciliation. It is still the barrier of sin which must be overcome.

If therefore this be the ministry of reconciliation in our present day, where then does the significance of the Cross lie in modern thought. The death of Christ on the Cross was the conclusive and effective expression of the love of Jesus Christ for God and man, and his complete devotion to the Kingdom of God. Not the Kingdom of God as an escape from eternal damnation, but the new Jerusalem to be glorified by the presence of God. Beauty and righteousness to be its outstanding qualities. A Kingdom where men are no longer to be exploited for gain, and where spiritual values are to be the standards of human life.

The more that Christ's personality was understood to be the full and complete expression of the character

of God, the more did his death become the assurance and guarantee that God loves us, forgives us, and is willing to do all things to save us.

The ministry of reconciliation is based upon the belief that love is the only true working principle of human society. "It teaches that the Kingdom of Evil has thrust aside and employed force, because love will support only a fraternal distribution of property and power, while force will support exploitation and oppression." It is the business of ministers and theologians to make the reconciliation effective in producing love among men and love for an eternal God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bacon, B. W., Jesus and Paul. New York; Macmillan, 1921.
- Bruce, A. B., Saint Paul's Conception of Christianity.
New York; Charles Scribner and Sons, 1911.
- Bushnell, H., Forgiveness and Law. N. Y.; Scribner,
Armstrong and Co., 1874.
- Campbell, J. M., The Heart of the Gospel. London; Fleming
H. Revell, 1907.
- Cave, S., The Doctrines of the Christian Faith. London;
Hodder and Stoughton, 1931.
- Cone, O., Paul, The Man, the Missionary and the Teacher.
N. Y.; Macmillan, 1898.
- Cross, G., Christian Salvation. Chicago; Univ. of Chicago
Press, 1925.
- Deissmann, A., Paul, A Study in Social and Religious History.
N.Y.; George H. Doran, 1926.
- Denney, J., The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation. N.Y.;
George H. Doran, 1918.
- The Death of Christ. Philadelphia; Westminster
Press, 1903.
- Griffith, G. O., Saint Paul's Life of Christ. N.Y.; George
H. Doran, 1925.
- Mackintosh, H. R., The Christian Experience of Forgiveness.
N.Y.; Harper and Brothers, 1927.
- Page, K., Jesus Or Christianity. N.Y.; Doubleday, Doran,
1929.
- Ramsey, W. M., The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present
Day. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1913.
- Rauschenbusch, W., A Theology for the Social Gospel.
N.Y.; Macmillan, 1917.

Ritschl, A., A Critical History of the Christian Doctrine
of Justification and Reconciliation.
Edinburgh; Edmonston and Douglass, 1872.

----- Justification and Reconciliation. Edinburgh;
T. & T. Clark, 1902.

Robinson, B. W., The Life of Paul. Chicago; Univ. of
Chicago Press, 1918.

Sabatier, A., The Doctrine of Atonement. N.Y.; G. P.
Putnam's Sons, 1904.

Schweitzer, A. W., The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle.
N.Y.; Henry Holt and Co., 1931.

Scott, C. A., A Christianity According to Saint Paul.
N.Y.; Macmillan, 1927.

Shaw, R. D., The Pauline Epistles. N.Y.; Charles Scrib-
ners Sons, 1903.

Simon, D. W., Reconciliation by Incarnation. Edinburgh;
T. & T. Clark, 1898.

Stevens, G. B., The Christian Doctrine of Salvation.
N. Y.; Charles Scribners Sons, 1905.

----- The Pauline Theology. N. Y.; Charles
Scribner, 1898.

----- The Theology of the New Testament. N.Y.;
Charles Scribner, 1899.

Waldenstrom, P., The Reconciliation. Chicago, John Marten-
son, 1888.

Weinel, H., Saint Paul, The Man and His Work. N.Y.; G. P.
Putnam's Sons, 1906.

Whitley, W. T. (Editor), The Doctrine of Grace. N.Y.;
Macmillan, 1931.

End of

Paul's doctrine of reconciliation

Bound volume is continued by

An examination of the ethical teachings of Jesus and

Paul as related to the Summum bonum

Emersonian mysticism and its sources

The struggle between classes for the division of wealth

The University Pastor Movement

The monotheism of Akhenaten

Search by above titles on archive.org to
continue reading this collection of Pacific
School of Religion Theses from 1936,
call number Thesis Cage 1936 v.4